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See data/info on energy potential in GSENM from this E&E article.

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**From:** Spotts, Richard <rspotts@blm.gov>  
**Date:** Thu, Apr 27, 2017 at 8:05 AM  
**Subject:** FYI - National Monuments: Trump's order could offer new openings for energy firms  
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FYI - If you have not already seen it, you may find the article below of interest. RS

## NATIONAL MONUMENTS

# Trump's order could offer new openings for energy firms

Pamela King, E&E News reporter

Published: Thursday, April 27, 2017.

Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah. Photo by Bob Wick/BLM, courtesy of Flickr.

President Trump's call to review at least 24 national monuments could ultimately offer energy firms new points of entry into western oil and gas plays.

The president's executive order instructs Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke first to produce a report on Bears Ears National Monument and then to recommend whether the administration should modify or rescind management of other sites designated after 1996 (Greenwire, April 26).

Though Bears Ears has limited potential for oil and gas development, industry groups have said that companies would be interested in infiltrating the 1.35-million-acre monument — if its federal protections were altered (Energywire, April 13).

"The Antiquities Act does not give the federal government unlimited power to lock up millions of acres of land and water, and it's time we ended this abusive practice," Trump said yesterday before signing the order.

During a Tuesday briefing, Zinke cautioned against assumptions that his review would open the door for more oil and gas activity on the lands his agency manages.

The executive order "doesn't predispose an outcome," he said.

When taken with Trump's executive order on energy independence, it's difficult to imagine the monuments order will have any other result, said House Natural Resources ranking member Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.).

"Requiring extensive 'review' of monuments while abolishing almost all review of new mining or drilling is evidence of bad faith," the congressman said in a statement yesterday.

The order's review timelines — 45 days for a look at Bears Ears and 120 days to examine all eligible monuments — is a mockery of the designation process, said Athan Manuel, director of the Sierra Club's lands protection program.

"It just doesn't pass the laugh test," he said. "They don't have enough staff there."

Manuel said the order is unlikely to open the monuments to new activity by oil and gas operators and other industries.

"I just don't believe this review is going to lead to any of these monuments being overturned," he said. "Public support is why all of these areas are being protected."

If the order does prompt any designation changes, here are three monuments that are particularly ripe for oil and gas development:

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in southern Utah. Photo courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management.

### **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument**

**Location:** Utah

**Date established:** Sept. 18, 1996

**Size:** 1.87 million acres

**Energy potential:** Grand Staircase-Escalante, the oldest monument eligible for review under Trump's executive order, contains billions of dollars' worth of coal, petroleum and other minerals, according to a 1997 [analysis](#) by the Utah Geological Survey. Twenty years ago, the area's petroleum resources alone were valued between \$20 million and \$1.1 billion, according to state geologist Lee Allison.

President Clinton's proclamation establishing the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument withdrew the region from new federal mineral leases. The designation honored existing claims, encompassing 68 mining leases across 2,700 acres, 85 oil and gas leases across 136,000 acres, and 18 coal leases across 52,800 acres, according to the monument's [management plan](#).

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in southwestern Colorado. Photo courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management.

### **Canyons of the Ancients National Monument**

**Location:** Colorado

**Date established:** June 9, 2000

**Size:** 178,000 acres

**Energy potential:** Among the sites included in this list, the designation defining Canyons of the Ancients National Monument included the strongest allowance of oil and gas development.

"Because most of the Federal lands have already been leased for oil and gas, which includes carbon dioxide, and development is already occurring, the monument shall remain open to oil and gas leasing and development," Clinton's [proclamation](#) says.

Clinton directed the Interior secretary to manage development of the monument's mineral resources to ensure that extraction would not interfere with the site's protected objects.

If the monument's designation were revisited, that balance could be disrupted, Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) said on a conference call yesterday.

"Clearly that is a landscape that is feeling pressure," he said.

Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Montana. Photo by the Bureau of Land Management, courtesy of Flickr.

### **Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument**

**Location:** Montana

**Date established:** Jan. 17, 2001

**Size:** 378,000 acres

**Energy potential:** The Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument contained 10 active wells and two approved drilling permits in 2008, according to a development scenario compiled by the Bureau of Land Management's Lewiston, Mont., field office. There were 41 total active wells and three approved permits in the monument's vicinity, the analysis shows.

BLM found high development potential in 18 areas within the monument and moderate potential in all other federal lands included in its study. That assessment was contingent upon market prices and infrastructure availability.

"With gas prices now ranging between \$5 and \$7/MCF and more infrastructure available, the economic incentive exists to further explore and develop natural gas resources in the Monument," the Lewiston office wrote nearly a decade ago.

The price of a thousand cubic feet of natural gas stood at \$3.26 yesterday.

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